

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated August 26, 2004, claims 1-23 were pending. Claims 1-6 and 8-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 103 in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,504,579 of Scherrer, U.S. Patent No. 6,327,002 of Rinaldi et al., and U.S. Patent No. 5,220,414 of Rabii et al. Claims 7, and 22-23 were objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent forms.

In this response, claims 2-4, 7, 9-11, and 16-19 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1, 5-6, 8, 12-13, 15, and 22-23 have been amended. Claims 24-25 have been added. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested.

Specifically, independent claim 1 has been amended to include an allowable subject matter of objected claim 7 and substantially all limitations of its intervening claims (e.g., claims 2-4 and 7). Independent claims 8 and 15 have been amended to include limitations similar to those recited in the amended claim 1. Thus, independent claims 1, 8, and 15 are allowable.

In addition, claims 22 and 23 have been amended as independent claims including substantially all limitations of its base and intervening claims (e.g., claims 2-3 and 5, and claims 2-3 and 6) respectively. New claims 24 and 25 have been added to include limitations similar to those recited in the amended claims 22 and 23 respectively. Thus, claims 22-25 are allowable.

Given that the rest of the claims depend from one of the above independent claims, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are allowable. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits the present application is now in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite or

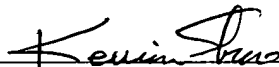
assist in the allowance of the present application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (408) 720-8300.

Please charge Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any shortage of fees in connection with this response.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 10/26/2004



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